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CANADA OPENS DOORS TO U.S. HOGS

The Office of the United States Trade Representative and the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that, effective immediately, Canada has opened its market to U.S. hogs. In response to urging by the U.S. government and extensive consultations between U.S. and Canadian officials, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency issued a directive which amends the Canadian regulations on how to import U.S. hogs.

“The United States is pleased that Canada has finally made the necessary regulatory changes to facilitate trade in U.S. hogs between our two countries,” stated U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky. “Combined with the opening of slaughter facilities in Canada, these new regulations, will not only help to avoid serious bottlenecks in processing and distribution, but will provide U.S. producers with additional market outlets for their production.”

“We expect that these regulatory changes and new processing facilities opening in Canada may result in U.S. producers exporting as many as 50,000 hogs in the year 2000, worth about \$4 million at today’s market prices, with significant growth in future years,” said Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman. “This is an important step that will significantly help U.S. hog producers.”

As part of a broader agriculture agreement reached between the United States and Canada on Dec. 4, 1998, Canada committed to change its animal health requirements to allow U.S. hogs from 37 states designated as free of the hog disease pseudorabies to move into Canada. Canada made initial changes to their animal health regulations last December, but certain barriers related to procedures for the handling and distribution of hogs remained in place. The new regulations streamline the procedures for handling and distributing hogs, increasing the window of time facilities have to slaughter hogs after they arrive in Canada, and give the facilities more options for disposing of hog waste. The certification procedures required to ship hogs from the U.S. were also simplified. These modified regulations make it economically feasible for U.S. producers to ship hogs to Canada.